

THE LEISURE HOUR

A FAMILY JOURNAL OF INSTRUCTION AND RECREATION.

"BEHOLD IN THESE WHAT LEISURE HOURS DEMAND,—AMUSEMENT AND TRUE KNOWLEDGE HAND IN HAND."—Cowper.



A SPT ON THE LANDING.

THE GREAT VAN BROEK PROPERTY.

CHAPTER XVI.—BOARDING-HOUSE GOSSIP—MRS. DOCTOR BENSON IS DISAPPOINTED OF A "SCENE."

It was the custom at Stuyvesant House to keep late hours; and the evening—to use a familiar phrase—had only just commenced, and the gentlemen had only just begun to drop in from the verandah, whither they had retired to smoke after dinner, when Mrs. Van Broek—as related in a preceding chapter—unable any longer to conceal her anxiety on account of the prolonged absence of her husband, retired from the drawing-room, at eight

o'clock. Notwithstanding the endeavours of the young wife to conceal from her fellow-boarders the cause of her agitation and distress of mind on reading the letter brought to her by the servant in the earlier part of the day, and notwithstanding her forced endeavours to appear at her ease at the dinner-table, she had failed in her object.

They had seen through the flimsy veil of cheerfulness that she had assumed. They had remarked the anxiety and the continuous changes in the expression of her countenance, that betrayed the constantly-recurring painful thoughts now ruffling the ordinary quietude of

her outward demeanour. Her sudden retreat from the drawing-room had been the signal to a certain coterie of the boarders to establish themselves in a quiet corner of the room, and relieve their minds by a discussion upon the strange occurrence which had disturbed the usually monotonous quiet of the household.

"Do you perceive—she has left the room, and gone up-stairs?" observed Mrs. Doctor Benson to the lady of the ex-consul from Italy. "I can see through folks at a glance. I should admire* to see the young chit like she who could throw dust in my eyes, my dear. Did you observe how pale she looked at dinner? And I watched her closely, and noticed that she hardly swallowed a mouthful. She sent her plate away every time almost untouched. Depend upon it, my dear—"(here she whispered in her friend's ear, and screwed up her thin lips, and half closed her eyes, and nodded her head till her false curls shook, to give effect and emphasis to her whisper). Then, again speaking aloud, she went on, "And so you'll see by-and-by."

"Do tell!" ejaculated Mrs. Latham, using a frequently-heard New England expression of surprise or dismay; for both these ladies were natives of the New England States.

"Yes," rejoined Mrs. Benson; "I'd lay my life on it. I'm seldom or never wrong in my conclusions." (She looked at her husband, whom she had taken into her confidence, and who was the only male member of the coterie.)

"No," said the Doctor, replying to his wife's look. "Mrs. Benson is a wonderfully clever woman—"

"*Clever!*" ejaculated Mrs. Benson, retorted the wife, with a contemptuous toss of her head. "I hope you don't apply that term to me in its proper meaning? There is no class of people I hold in greater contempt than your silly, easy-going, *clever* folk, whom people call good-tempered because they haven't got a mite of spirit in their bodies. *Me clever*, indeed! When did you ever see me clever, Doctor Benson?"

"Pardon me, my dear," said the Doctor: "I stand corrected. I used the term *clever* in accordance with our old-country acceptance of the word. No, my dear; I didn't mean to say that you are what is termed a *clever* woman in this land of universal progress. What I did mean to say, Mrs. Latham" (addressing himself to that lady), "is that Mrs. Benson is a wonderfully *smart* woman. I never, in the whole course of my experience, met with a female in whose discrimination, in whose quick perception of character, in whose thorough knowledge of human nature—in a word, in whose *smartness*—I would put greater confidence than in Mrs. Benson's."

"Very good, Doctor Benson," replied the lady. "But when *will* you learn to forget those used-up, old-world expressions? And how often am I to tell you not to apply the *ojus* term *female* to me, nor to any of the feminine sex? Such vulgarity is perfectly awful! In the presence of company, too."

The Doctor was silenced, and Mrs. Benson, having administered what she considered a sufficient reproof, and vindicated herself from the charge of being a female, and at the same time received from her husband a confirmation of her "*smartness*," continued—

"Of course, my dear, we can't tell *who* is to blame. If I could have got hold of the letter! But that bold, forward minx, Jane Malcolm, actually snatched it out of my hand, and no doubt slipped it into the bosom of her

dress, to read at her leisure. That girl is awfully vulgar."

"It is strange that Mr. Van Broek didn't arrive at the hour appointed," said Mrs. Latham; "or, if he found himself delayed at Albany, or at Schenectady, that he didn't write."

"I'd admire to see my husband act in such a manner!" replied Mrs. Benson, with a severe glance at the Doctor. "However, there's no fear: a dutiful husband would know better what is due to his wife. But, my dear, do you fancy that Mr. Van Broek *has* been to Albany, or that he *is* unavoidably detained? He's been to Albany as much as my husband has. If he *was* my husband, I'd fix him, I guess. He wouldn't hear the last of it in one while. But that poor chit hasn't a mite of spirit in her. Now, what I want to know is how *we* ought to act about this letter?"

"I don't exactly take your meaning," said a lady who made the fourth in the little coterie.

"My meaning is plain enough," replied Mrs. Benson. "Is it not due to ourselves that we should, in some way or other, acquaint Mr. Van Broek, when he *does* come, of the fact that a letter was received by his wife in his absence, and that she took on awfully about it?"

"Well, perhaps it is, now you put it in that light," said Mrs. Latham. "But, then, it mayn't be anything, you know. And since the poor young thing doesn't wish her husband to learn that she fainted away, and since she said *she* would show him the letter herself—"

"In the first place, my dear," interrupted Mrs. Benson, "I don't believe she's got the letter to show. I believe that Miss Malcolm has it safe enough. A likely thing she give it up when once she got hold of it and had a chance to read it! Then I disapprove of complicity in these matters. I conclude how* we ought, out of respect to ourselves, and for the credit of the house, either to insist that Mrs. Van Broek shall deliver up the letter to us, or shall make us acquainted with its contents; and I think a note should be written to her to tell her the conclusion at which we have arrived, and to assure her that, if she fails to satisfy our curiosity on this point, we shall feel it our duty to acquaint her husband with the *facts*."

"I wouldn't be too hard upon the poor young creature," replied Mrs. Latham. "We'll keep our eyes about us, and be guided by circumstances. We'll see what kind of a man the patroon is. He's awful rich, they say—"

At this moment the wheels of a cab were heard rolling over the stones. The vehicle drew up opposite the house, and Miss Dunlop, who had been looking out of the drawing-room window, joined the little party in the corner of the room.

"Oh, aunt!" exclaimed the young lady, addressing the ex-consul's wife, "Mr. Van Broek has come. I fancy it is he. I saw him alight from the carriage—a tall, fine-looking man, though it is too dark to see his features. Hark! he's rung the door-bell."

Mrs. Lyman, who was seated near them, rose at this announcement, and hastened to the hall to welcome her new boarder; and the other ladies rushed in a body to the landing, and stood looking down over the balusters, each eager to get the first glimpse of the wealthy patroon of Van Broek Manor.

Miss Malcolm, who had gone to Mrs. Van Broek's room a short time before, fearing that she might be ill, now came down-stairs and requested Mrs. Lyman, from Mrs. Van Broek, to inform that lady's husband that she

* "I should admire to," a quaint New-Englandism.

† The word "*clever*," as understood in colloquial phraseology in the United States, means simple, easy-going. What we should term in England a "good fellow" is a "*clever fellow*."

* The New-Englanders "expect" or "conclude," but never anticipate, or think, or decide, or determine, etc.

was not very well, and was lying down on her bed, and to beg him to go to her room as soon as possible.

Mrs. Benson, who, with the other ladies standing near, heard this request, glanced triumphantly at Mrs. Latham.

"I told you so," she whispered in that lady's ear. "There'll be a scene."

Mr. Van Broek, whom, the reader will recollect, we left, in a preceding chapter, on his way to Brooklyn, after his interview with Nancy Slowbury in Orange Street, New York, was not altogether at ease in his mind. A great and secret dread, the nature of which we shall leave to the course of events to disclose, had come suddenly and unexpectedly upon him; and, though the death of Miles Slowbury had relieved him to a certain degree, he had heard and seen sufficient in the course of his visit to Nancy Slowbury's lodgings to fill his mind with anxiety. Then there was the letter that Nancy had informed him she had delivered at the house for his wife; and, even if he could have intercepted the letter, or supposing—which he felt was improbable—it had not yet been read, still, according to the young woman's story, there remained the interview that had taken place at the Astor House, between his wife and Miles Slowbury, to be explained; and, what made the affair more difficult and perplexing, he, though he had perhaps some inkling of the matter, was in reality ignorant of the nature of the contents of the letter, and ignorant also of the tenor of the words that had been spoken at the interview. He only knew that for several days past his young wife had manifested a degree of reserve and thoughtfulness, almost of timidity, in his presence, for which he had been unable to account, but which appeared now to be explained. Still he was a man fruitful in resources, and he hoped yet to explain matters in a manner that would prove sufficiently satisfactory. All, however, depended upon the nature of the contents of the letter. He thought that possibly the letter had not yet been opened; or if it were merely sent to himself, under cover to his wife, all might yet be well.

He entered the house, and in a distraught manner responded to the somewhat fulsome compliments of the landlady.

He had hoped that his young wife would come, as usual, to meet him. But she did not come; and this omission, or possibly purposed neglect, on her part, strengthened his fears.

The landlady offered to conduct him to his rooms.

"They are the best rooms in the house, sir," said the widow. "It happened most opportunely that when your agent, Mr. Bradford—a most gentlemanly man—applied to me for a suite of apartments for yourself and your lady, the suite on the second-floor back, which had been occupied by Senator Hopkins and his family, were just vacated. The Senator was obliged to 'locate' himself in Washington, in order to attend to his senatorial duties. The sitting-room commands a charming prospect of New York Bay and the Jersey shore. Your good lady was perfectly enchanted with it. The bedroom, where you will find Mrs. Van Broek, who, I trust, is but slightly indisposed, is on the floor above, over the front drawing-room, and faces the street. I have had the apartments newly 'fixed up' in the most elegant and *recherché* style. Will you not just step into the drawing-room, sir, and look at the furniture and 'fixings,' before you go up-stairs?"

They had reached the landing, and the group of lady-boarders, who had been curiously scanning the dress and appearance of the patroon from their coigne of vantage, had flown into the drawing-room upon the near

approach of the gentleman, with a flutter of muslin and crinoline that made as much noise as would the flight of a flock of startled doves (P). But Mr. Van Broek had hardly listened to a syllable of the landlady's harangue; his mind had been otherwise occupied; and, when she again asked him whether he would not step into the drawing-room for a moment, he answered, with an abstracted air—

"No, I thank you; never mind. The rooms will do well enough, I dare say. The bedroom is—I think you said?"

"Over the front drawing-room, sir. The third door on the left hand."

"Ah, yes, thank you. The *third* door? Here, just take my valise; I'll go up-stairs at once;" and, dropping his valise at Mrs. Lyman's feet, he sprang up the next flight of stairs, taking two steps at a time.

"The man's a brute! a perfect brute!" muttered the discomfited and slighted landlady, tossing her head. "To ask me to take hold of his valise, indeed! as if I was a hired servant. Ho! Brian," she called over the balusters to the Irish factotum, "come up-stairs and take the valise the gentleman has left on the landing into his sitting-room."

The tone of voice in which the widow issued this mandate was intended to instruct her new lodger that she was not accustomed to act in the capacity of porter to the gentlemen and ladies who formed part of her select establishment. Mrs. Lyman was a great stickler for the proprieties, and she expected that her new boarder would stop in his ascent and turn round and apologize for his discourtesy. No such thing, however. Mr. Van Broek proceeded on his way, and the landlady re-entered the drawing-room with head erect and folded arms, carrying her portly person with the dignity of a queen.

"The man has no manners," she repeated to the assembled ladies. "Never listened to a word I said about the rooms, though I expect there are no such rooms anywhere else on the Heights. He wouldn't stop a moment to look at the new 'fixings;' and he actually *chucked* his valise at me, and expected me to carry it into the sitting-room for him! I really don't wonder at his poor young wife's taking on so. I shouldn't wonder, now, if that letter to-day that hurried her so, poor thing, was nothing more than a notice that he was coming back, and *she* knew what she'd have to put up with *them*."

"Ah!" sighed Mrs. Benson. "That letter," she said to her friend Mrs. Latham, *sotto voce*, "related to something very different from *that*, or my penetration is very much at fault."

Mrs. Whittaker here stepped forward as a peacemaker.

"Be calm, my dear Mrs. Lyman," said the old lady. "Mr. Van Broek is, no doubt, weary after his long journey, and perhaps anxious about his young wife, whom he knew to have been expecting him home earlier. I dare say he didn't think what he was saying. I'm sure, though Mr. Whittaker and I never had a downright quarrel in our lives, he's often come home, a little out of sorts, when he has been overworked in the city, or when something has gone wrong in business; and I dare say we should have had many little tiffs if I had resented these little outbursts of irritability. But I used to soothe him, and try to make his home peaceful and happy, at least; and very soon he began to come to me in all his troubles, and we would talk them over together, and we made a bargain that we would always confide everything to each other, and you can't think how well that plan has answered with us. Mr. Whittaker and I have had

no secrets between us for twenty years, and we never disagree about anything."

Mrs. Benson shook her head.

"I agree with you," she said, "that it is not only desirable, but it is the bounden duty of a husband to keep no secrets from the wife of his bosom. But I do not approve of the soothing system. It is apt to encourage husbands to give themselves airs. It might answer with some men, but it would never do with my husband. In fact, I make it a point never to soothe Doctor Benson. Then, as to a system of mutual confidence between husbands and wives, I cannot say that I look upon that with approval. There are many little matters which a wife prefers to keep to herself. At all events, I hold that the wife should be free to exercise her own judgment as to whether she shall disclose them to her husband or not. The masculine intellect is, as a general rule, so obtuse, that men are utterly unable to sympathize with the feminine sex with regard to the more delicate and refined affairs of social life. There are many things, for instance, that I should never think of confiding to Doctor Benson."

Mrs. Whittaker replied with a smile to the remarks of Mrs. Benson.

"At all events, ladies," she said, "don't let us judge too harshly of our own sex. It has really pained me to hear certain allusions that have been made to the young wife up-stairs. She seems to me to be a very amiable girl, and she is *but* a girl. I cannot see what we have to do with a matter of the nature of which we are perfectly, absolutely ignorant."

To this speech, which was especially directed to Mrs. Benson, that strong-minded lady made no immediate reply. Subsequently, however, she stigmatized Mrs. Whittaker as an impudent, intermeddling old busy-body, and, with many nods and winks, and compressing of the lips, and upraising of the eyes, as much as to imply that she was not as other women, she assured her particular friends that they would soon discover who was right and who was wrong, and then seated herself near the door that she might listen to any voice that might, in the heat of argument or recrimination, be indiscreetly raised higher than usual. All, however, was silent in Mrs. Van Broek's room up-stairs. The lady got out of patience, and, under the pretence that the drawing-room was unpleasantly warm, she went out on the landing to breathe the cooler air. Presently she heard the door open on the landing above. She heard the sound of footsteps coming along the passage towards the stairs, and she was about to beat a retreat into the drawing-room, when the sound ceased.

Mr. and Mrs. Van Broek had stopped at the top of the staircase, and were conversing in low tones. Mrs. Benson crept softly to the foot of the stairs and strained her ears to listen.

"I feel so much relieved, Julius," she heard Mrs. Van Broek say. "You cannot think what a relief you have afforded me. I was so glad when you spoke of that letter——"

"Silly girl to trouble your mind about it!" Mr. Van Broek coaxingly replied.

"Nay, Julius," the young wife went on to say; "you acknowledge yourself that I had reason. And I had made up my mind to show you the letter, and also to tell you of the former trouble. I could no longer keep the secret. I think I should have pined to death—I was so miserable. Yet I knew not how to begin, and when you spoke first it opened the way at once, and when you explained the matter it was like a reprieve from death. I really thought I was very ill," she added, with

a pleasant little laugh, "and I felt well, and strong, and happy, all in a moment. I feel pity for the poor man, too. How much he must have suffered to have been driven insane! and how strange it is that insane persons should so often take a dislike to those who have been their best and dearest friends, and imagine all sorts of ridiculous things concerning them. I have read of such things before, but this is the first time I have actually known of a case in point. You must do something for that poor young woman, Julius."

"So I intend, my love."

"Don't you think, Julius, it would do well for me to call upon her, or to write and ask her to call upon me? Perhaps I might learn from her how we can best aid her. She may be bashful and timid, poor thing, with you?"

"I think not, my dear. I certainly could not think of permitting you to call upon the young woman where she now resides, and I doubt whether she would care to visit you. She has evidently seen better days, and shrinks from the idea of communicating with strangers. Now she has already spoken with me, and will not have the bitter ordeal to pass through again. You can advise me, after I have seen her again, and learnt what are her own views; and perhaps, at some future day, when she will be in better circumstances, you may see her."

"Poor creature! Well, perhaps you are right, Julius. By-the-bye—the child. Did you see the child?"

"The child!" exclaimed Mr. Van Broek. "What child? I never spoke to you of a child."

"No, dear; but Brian said the poor young woman had a child with her, and that the child was crying. I thought perhaps it might be her own?"

"Her own child, my dear Ellen! She is a young girl—not much older, I should say, than you. Now you mention it, however, I recollect seeing a child who was in the room when I called, but who was taken away before I left. The child of some neighbour, I presume."

"Well, dear Julius," said the young wife, "I'll never trouble myself to keep a secret from you again. How much pain and anxiety had been spared me if I had acquainted you with the fact that the poor man had called at the hotel in your absence, a fortnight ago. Perhaps, too, you might have sought him out and relieved him, and this accident might not have happened. The poor man might yet have been living. Oh, I have been very wrong!"

"You have been very foolish, my dear Ellen, to trouble your little head about nothing. That is the extent of your wrong-doing, my love," replied Mr. Van Broek. "But come along down-stairs. I thought our explanations were over in the bed-room, and here we are having a second edition on the stairs. I am afraid, too, that I was not over-civil to our landlady when I came in: I was so anxious about you. Let us go into the drawing-room for an hour or so—it is not yet ten o'clock—or our fellow-boarders will fancy that we are very strange and reserved with them."

Mrs. Benson had heard every word of the above conversation, and she was not altogether satisfied with it. She was, in fact, disappointed. She certainly had discovered that there *had* been a secret. But that secret had been disclosed, and she was none the wiser. Indeed, the secret appeared to have been one of comparative non-importance. The husband and his youthful wife were evidently on the best possible terms with each other, and there would be no "scene" after all. She had staked her reputation for discernment on the result of the meeting

between Mr. Van Broek and his wife, and she had lost the stake. She now hastened back to the drawing-room, without being seen by the husband and wife, who first went into their own room, and, seating herself on a sofa, she resolved in her own mind to say nothing respecting the conversation she had heard—at least, for the present. The time might come, she thought, when she might obtain some clue to its elucidation, and with that object in view she resolved to alter her prearranged tactics, and to use her best endeavours, in spite of Miss Malcolm—whose interference she dreaded—to cultivate the friendship of Mrs. Van Broek.

Later in the evening Mr. and Mrs. Van Broek entered the drawing-room arm-in-arm.

The anxious, abstracted look the patroon had worn when he entered the house an hour or two previous had disappeared from his face. He introduced himself and his wife to the assembled boarders, adding—

"I presume, however, that Mrs. Van Broek has already made your acquaintance, ladies and gentlemen. For my part, I have to apologize to you, and to Mrs. Lyman, for my non-appearance at dinner-time to day. My wife has told me that she informed you that I should arrive from Albany in time to meet you at the dinner-table. The fault was mine. I was unavoidably detained." He then expressed to Mrs. Lyman his perfect satisfaction with his apartments, and, by his easy, affable manners, not only succeeded in obliterating from the mind of the sensitive landlady the brusqueness which had given her offence, but left a pleasing impression of himself on the minds of all the boarders. As to the young wife, she appeared like a different creature. The timid, thoughtful look, which had been a topic of general comment among the boarders, had disappeared from her features. Her eyes sparkled with gladness, a smile rested upon her lips and dimpled her cheek, and she appeared radiant with happiness. She was once again the light-hearted Ellen of the old parsonage-house at Acton—the girlish vivacity of those days gone by slightly toned down by the graceful dignity which sat so well upon her in her new position as a young married woman, and the mistress of Van Broek Manor.

And Julius Van Broek forgot his cares, and lulled himself in fancied security. The Nemesis, who had suddenly, and when least expected, made her appearance, had lain herself again to rest, as he hoped and believed for ever; and, casting from his bosom all care for, or fear of the future, he gave himself up from that period to the pleasures and enjoyments of life which his newly-acquired wealth and position enabled him to indulge in to his heart's content.

THE HOUSELESS POOR.

At the beginning of last year we gave a short account ("Leisure Hour," No. 680) of the Houseless Poor Act, which at that time had been for a brief period in operation as an experiment to test the working of a new plan, by which all who sought admittance and relief at the workhouse doors should be received and relieved. This Act ceased to be in force on Lady Day 1865, but was subsequently revived and confirmed, and must now be considered as the established law regulating the conduct of workhouse officials towards the casual poor. At the time of writing that paper we had witnessed some of the good effects of the new system, as apparent in the diminution of pauperism, and especially of those sad spectacles which used to startle us occasionally when passing the workhouse gates after dark on wintry nights; and we

were in hopes that this apparent success was real, and that the new law was destined to accomplish satisfactorily the purpose for which it was framed. Our readers know that these hopes were far from being fully realized; that, notwithstanding the stringent clauses of the Act, its injunctions were not complied with in a good many cases; and that some of the London parishes, and one especially, gained a far from enviable notoriety by the stubborn stand they made against its provisions, and by asserting their right to treat as they chose the casual poor who applied for relief. Before, however, we bestow unqualified blame upon the parochial authorities who acted thus independently, and, as it would seem, unwarrantably, it may be as well to glance for a moment at the subjects with whom they had to deal, and with whom the new Act placed them on a footing, which, novel to both parties, was far from an acceptable one to the party who had been heretofore in authority, and who now found their authority in a manner nullified.

The casual poor may be divided into three classes: these are, first, the able-bodied and industrious, who are willing to work if they have work to do; secondly, the not able-bodied, the old, partially infirm, helpless, and unfriended persons of both sexes, who in fair weather and prosperous seasons can manage, as they say, "to rub along," but who want help, and must have it, in the evil day; and, thirdly, the "sturdy rogues," as old laws style them, the vagabond prowling knaves and scamps, who never work or intend to work, but have made up their minds to live upon the industry of others. Now, that the first of these classes should be supplied with the relief they need to help them to tide over their temporary difficulties, no one will deny. It is not merely true charity to grant them assistance, but it is the soundest policy as well: it should be given them cheerfully and readily, and in such a way that the receiver should feel that he incurred no disgrace in accepting it, while he ought not to be subjected to a word or look of rebuke. The second class are even more the objects of sympathy, and might appropriately receive larger and more effectual or more frequent relief. But then comes in that terrible third class, who, reared in vagrancy, which years seldom fail to harden into ruffianism, swarm wherever there is a charitable dole to be distributed, assert their claim to a share of it, and, as a consequence, control and regulate its distribution; because the claimants to a dole dealt out by authority of law must of necessity be all treated alike—the relieving-officer cannot be permitted to make any distinction between them—and, as it is evidently sound policy to contribute as little as possible to the support of the vagabonds, those who deserve better at our hands are in practice ranked with them, and share the meed of their undeservings.

After the new Act had been in operation during one winter, inquiries were made as to its results, and its consequent value as a law; the inquiries being directed to those whose practical knowledge should have given them the best means of judging—namely, the masters of workhouses. The opinions thus obtained were by no means generally in favour of the Act on the whole, though the benefits it had conferred upon large numbers of the suffering poor were not denied or kept in the background. It was shown that, in several of the metropolitan parishes, the number of applicants relieved during the course of last winter were as three to one compared with the number relieved in the previous winter; but it was also unfortunately shown that the new law had had the effect of increasing vagrancy in an alarming degree. On this account many of the respondents were of opinion that the Act was founded on

mistaken notions of humanity, and in ignorance of the habits and dispositions of the class who make vagrancy a trade, who consider themselves entitled to roam the country at will, begging a little, pilfering a little, extorting charity by intimidation, and preying on the community in various ways, while all the time they regard the workhouse as a hotel provisioned for their accommodation, and in which they are to have their wants supplied, without being called on for payment. Persons of this class have no claim on our compassion; and when we learn that during the last year they have greatly increased in number; that they are known to dissipate the resources they gain by begging or pilfering in drunkenness and debauchery, and spend their days alternately in the prison and the workhouse; that they combine to extort relief by tearing up their clothes, thus compelling the poor-law executive to provide them with new ones; that their conduct in the casual ward is often in other respects most vile and loathsome, exercising a most demoralizing influence,—we need not wonder that masters of workhouses, to whom the influx of such scoundrels is a nightly pest, should regard the new Act as a mistake, and even something worse. To meet the case of these scamps, it is suggested by the Master of the Strand Union that they should be firmly dealt with by the Legislature in some establishment set especially apart for them, so that the other recipients of relief should not be subjected to the contamination of their example; and another of the respondents does not scruple to recommend “flogging as undoubtedly the only remedy and cure” for such as destroy their clothing in order to extort new.

From other reports we gather some characteristic items, tending to show in some degree the special working of the new Act. Thus we learn how the “sturdy rogues” testify their abhorrence of work by turning their backs on the parish of St. James, Westminster, and ceasing to patronize it when the full tale of task-work is enforced. Also that in Mile End Old Town a new class of casuals has turned up, inasmuch as working men and youths now apply who never applied before; some of them coming to the gates only after the public-houses are all closed, and arriving in an excited, uproarious state, disturbing the other inmates—a novel fact this, which, in our view, tells more forcibly against the new system of indiscriminate relief than anything else which has been adduced.

But, though most of the masters of workhouses condemn the Act, and some even tell us it is not worth the paper it is printed on, it is noticeable that there are not wanting those who praise it as warmly; thus the guardians of Fulham highly approve of it, and it is, indeed, in general good repute among the outlying parishes; the reason of which appears to be, however, that it does not increase, but rather lightens their responsibilities, by driving the casual poor into the more densely-populated districts.

It has been objected against the reports from workhouse masters, from which we have quoted, that such reports are not official; that is, that they were not demanded by Government authority, but were elicited by newspaper editors and reporters. We cannot see that their value is at all affected by the means used to elicit them. They are not anonymous, and must be regarded as the candid judgment of the new measure formed by those who have had to carry it into execution. Whether the judgment is well founded, and is not subject to reversal from data to be obtained after a more lengthened experience, that is another matter. Not wishing to derive our own view entirely from the reports published

in the newspapers, we have ourselves made some few inquiries from persons in office as well qualified to judge as the men whose opinions are quoted above. The conviction, so far as we can gather, seems to be prevalent among the poor-law executive, that the opening of the workhouses to all applicants indiscriminately *must* operate in the multiplication of vagrants; that it has so operated already, and will do so more largely as the fact that the London workhouses are so available becomes more generally known. The rural poor grow up (we are told) with the notion that London is a mine of wealth—that its streets are “paved with gold;” and their heads are full of traditions of penniless youngsters getting on in London until they become men of fortune. When, having these notions in their heads, they are informed that an Act of Parliament has assured them of food and shelter, and that the relieving officer has not power to refuse either, they are apt to accept the fact as an offer of gratuitous board and lodging, and an invitation to start for London and try their fortunes. Arriving in London, they wander the streets in idleness by day, and, herding in the casual wards by night along with gaol-birds and the worst of vagabonds, they become speedily corrupted through the force of association and example, and thus go to swell the mass of vagrancy that afflicts the land. We confess that this picture, which can hardly be called an ideal one, strikes us with considerable force, and points to the urgent necessity for some immediate and efficacious remedy against an evil so obvious and so sure to increase if not in some way counteracted.

Still, we are not disposed to indorse the dictum which declares the new Act a failure. The good it has effected is patent to all who walk the streets of London by night; and there must be thousands of the deserving poor to whom it is a frequent benefactor, by procuring them bread to eat, and a nightly shelter from the weather. That it has failed to do much that was expected from it is shown by the increase of vagrancy as pointed out above; by the fact that the houses of refuge continue to be crowded just as they were before it became law; and by the sadder fact that, spite of both workhouses and refuges, people still die of starvation in our streets.

What are the remedial measures which it lies within the scope of the law to apply? This is, of all questions, one of the most difficult, but yet not one which precludes such response as the exigencies of the case seem to suggest. To us it appears that the partial failure of the new law, and the still greater failure of previous measures, which failure rendered the new law necessary, are traceable to the comparatively small amount of talent, of personal influence, and of administrative skill which have been brought to bear upon a most important and vital question. We have regarded the management of the poor as a trifling affair, and have confided the control of it to a mediocre and incompetent class of minds. What is wanted is a radical change in the constitution of boards of guardians, and such a thorough sifting of workhouse masters and functionaries as should raise the general intellectual standard to a much higher level. The guardianship of the poor should be undertaken by gentlemen of education, whose sympathies are not dulled by a cruel routine, and whose vested interests would not quench their humanity; and workhouse masters should be at least as carefully selected as governors of gaols, should be as well paid, and should bear as high a character for capacity and integrity; while at the same time they should be subjected to frequent authoritative inspection and supervision. Under such control the details of workhouse management would soon change

their character. Classification could then be carried out in a manner which it is hopeless to look for now; the prowling vagabond would find out ere long that his game was up, and that he must henceforth cease to prey upon the poor-rates; and the unfortunate and industrious poor man would derive from them that benefit of which he is now more than half shorn by the vagrant.

To render the change we contemplate fully effective, however, something equivalent to it in operation must be introduced into the houses of refuge. It is but too plain that not a few of these are the frequent resort of vagrants and impostors, who prefer them to the workhouses on account of the superiority of their accommodation and their fare, and especially on account of the absence of the labour-test, which is their abomination. To be really efficient, no refuge ought to exist without the means of applying a labour-test, compliance with which should be the condition of admission; though we are far from desiring that it should be indiscriminately applied. In a refuge, where the relief is known by the recipients to be purely eleemosynary, classification could be easily carried out where necessary; and the labour-test, if discreetly managed, might aid materially in discriminating character, and determining who are, and who are not, fit objects for charity. In workhouses the vagrant often potters and dawdles over his work, and quits his unfinished task with a sneer at the officer, as he takes his leave at noon, knowing that he can return at will for the accommodation he wants, whether he works or not. He could not do that in the refuge; and for this, among other reasons, the refuge should have the means of testing him by setting him to work.

Some fifteen or sixteen years ago a measure was suggested, and discussed at some length, having for its object the suppression of vagrancy, which it proposed to effect by empowering masters of workhouses to detain for an indefinite time within the workhouse walls any applicant at their pleasure. Men well acquainted with the habits of professional vagabonds saw that this power, in hands skilled to wield it, would tell wonderfully on the vagrant class, whose nomad proclivities make confinement a torture; and the most experienced of the workhouse masters would have been glad of the measure; it fell to the ground, however, being thought too great an inroad upon the liberty of the subject. It is a remedy that would justly be regarded with suspicion in a free country, though it is very certain that it would act as a forcible check to the abuse of public charity.

We have intimated already that we cannot consider the Houseless Poor Act a failure. We may state, further, our opinion that it might have been rendered much more successful if poor-law guardians and workhouse officials had given to it their zealous support and co-operation. Perhaps it was too much to look for this while the law was upon its trial. Functionaries who found it a troublesome innovation, breaking in upon a routine to which habit had rendered them partial, could hardly be expected to receive it very favourably, and to facilitate as far as in them lay its working out the desired result. Now, however, that it has become the established law, we may hope for more general and more genuine co-operation on the part of all concerned in its practical working. There can be no question but that the Act is based on principles of the purest justice towards the distressed poor: it will be a disgrace to our social policy if it is allowed to suffer defeat merely from the audacious practices of rogues and vagabonds.

Since the above remarks were sent to the printer considerable excitement on this subject has been occa-

sioned by the publication, in "The Pall Mall Gazette," of three articles, entitled "A Night in a Workhouse." These graphic papers set forth in detail the experience of a gentleman who, assuming the disguise of a casual pauper, applied to the Lambeth Workhouse in that character, and passed the night there, in order to test, by his own experience, the relief and accommodation accorded to the poor. The revelations he has made public, frightfully hideous and disgraceful as they are, yet bear the stamp of literal truth, and refuse to be explained away. They confirm in a remarkable manner the suspicions, so frequently expressed, of the advocates of the Houseless Poor Act, that it had not received fair play at the hands of the parochial authorities, whose objections against it must therefore fall to the ground. Still more forcibly do they point to the necessity for some such remedial changes in the constitution of the authorities themselves as we have suggested above. We can but rejoice that these disclosures have been made, feeling sure that publicity is the best and only cure for abuses so demoralizing, so revolting, and so cruel.

One point has already been made evident, that greater discipline must be maintained in dealing with the casual poor, whether by employing a more efficient staff of officials, or by obtaining aid from the police. In some Unions the services of the Metropolitan Police have been allowed by the Commissioners, and certainly with most beneficial results. It is likely that this experience will lead to more general arrangements for enabling the police to undertake the duties of assistant relieving officers.

ILLUSTRATIONS OF JEWISH CUSTOMS.

II.—INITIATION INTO THE COVENANT OF ABRAHAM.

THE first and one of the most important ceremonies in the life of an Israelite is the rite of circumcision. It is practised upon the child at the earliest period of its existence, as soon as it is eight days old, provided that it be in perfect health; otherwise the ceremony is deferred for a time. The reason for the importance attached by the Jews to this commandment will be readily understood by referring to the passage where the precept is given (Gen. xvii. 10), whence we learn that it constituted the covenant by which the Lord ratified the promises he had formerly made to Abraham. As the Lord had distinguished Abraham and his descendants spiritually by his revelation, he also required that they should be physically distinguished.

This rite has also always been understood as fraught with a deep moral significance. The Jew was to be reminded by the "covenant sealed on his flesh" that his life should be distinguished by holiness and purity. Hence the word "uncircumcised" was, in the Hebrew language, used generally in a purely figurative sense; and phrases like "uncircumcised of heart" (Lev. xxvi. 41), or "of ear" (Jer. vi. 10), prove that this rite was understood as a type of some of those inward virtues which constitute the chief end of practical religion.

The practice of circumcision as such was, however, not confined to the Hebrews. Herodotus, one of the most ancient secular historians, mentions its existence among the Egyptians (ii. 104). Travellers relate that it is in use among the Kaffir nations of South Africa, and that it has been discovered in many Southern islands of the Indian Seas and the Pacific Ocean. And it is known with certainty that, at the present day, the practice is followed by all Mahometans and by the

Abyssinian and Coptic Christians. But with the Jews alone it has always been exclusively a religious ceremony, and as such adhered to with the greatest tenacity, and regarded with earnest veneration.

† The ceremonial of the initiation into the Abrahamic

and says as follows: "Blessed art thou, O Lord our God, who sanctified his beloved [Abraham] from the womb, and ordained an ordinance for his kindred, and sealed his descendants with the mark of the holy covenant: therefore for the merits of this, O living God,



S. Solomon.

covenant may be performed either at home or in the synagogue. The first thing done is to choose the *Sandakin*, the godfather and godmother, who are selected from among the relations or immediate friends of the parents. The godmother brings the child to the synagogue or to the apartment in the house where the operation is to be performed, and where, in ordinary circumstances, no less than ten males must have previously assembled. Our engraving represents the godfather receiving the child from the godmother, whereupon the congregation exclaims, "Blessed is he that cometh!" Candles are lighted in the room, in order to indicate the festive nature of the ceremony by which the child is received into the Jewish community. The godfather is seated on a chair, and the child placed on a cushion in his lap. The operator, called Mohel, who, after carefully preparing all the requisites, has been engaged in earnest prayer, now steps forward, and, immediately before performing the rite, says the following blessing: "Blessed art thou, O Lord our God; King of the universe, who hast sanctified us with thy precepts, and commanded us circumcision." The father of the child then utters a thanksgiving to God, "who had commanded him to initiate his child into the covenant of Abraham."

The congregation present respond, "As he has entered into the covenant, so may he enter into the law [*i.e.*, to study and keep the law], the canopy [the marriage state], and good and virtuous deeds."

When the operation has been concluded, the godfather rises from the chair, still holding the child in his arms, while the Mohel takes a cup of wine in his hand,

our Portion and Rock, command the deliverance of the beloved holy seed of our kindred from perdition, for the sake of the covenant that has been put on his flesh. Blessed art thou, O Lord, Maker of the covenant!" After this the child receives its name with the words, "Our God and the God of our fathers, preserve this child to his father and mother; and his name shall be called in Israel —, son of —." Appropriate verses from Scripture are added, such as (Prov. xxxiii. 25), "Thy father and mother shall rejoice, and they who begot thee shall be glad;" after which the child is returned by the godfather to the godmother. Then the prayer of *Alenu* is recited, wherein the hope for the speedy realization of the kingdom of God upon earth is expressed: "When the idols shall be utterly destroyed, and the wicked on earth be turned towards Thee; when all the inhabitants of the world shall know and understand that unto Thee every knee must bend, and every tongue swear fealty."

The ceremony being thus concluded, offerings of money for the poor are made by the parents of the child, by the godfather, and the friends of the parties. The father then entertains his guests at a breakfast, which meal is understood, from the ceremony that has preceded it, to partake, if we may so term it, of somewhat a religious character; and in the grace said after it special prayers for the child that has been initiated, its parents, the Mohel, and *Sandakim*, are inserted.

The day on which the ceremony takes place is naturally one of great anxiety to the parents; but this anxiety is tempered by the joyous consciousness that a holy and Divine commandment is being fulfilled. It

is said that, during the ceremony, the prophet Elijah, who is regarded by them as "the angel of the covenant" mentioned in Malachi iii. 1, is present; a poetical conception of the belief that the fulfilment of the Divine behest becomes as a ministering angel to guard and shield the child from every danger and fatality.

THE WRECK OF THE "MYSORE."

It is an old story now, and every year brings new shipwrecks and disasters at sea, yet the sad tale of the wreck of the "Mysore" may interest some readers. I have before me the manuscript journal of one of the few survivors. It is too long to give entire, but I gather from it the leading incidents of the following narrative:—

The "Mysore" was a vessel of 800 tons burden, trading between China and Calcutta. My relative, Captain W—, was her second officer, and he, along with seven Lascars, was saved out of a crew of one hundred men when she went down in a hurricane in the Chinese Sea. After being exposed for thirteen days in an open boat to the inclemency of a tropical monsoon, without food or a compass to guide them, and after being driven about for 600 miles, they were safely landed at a Malay town in the Gulf of Siam, where they were kindly treated by the Rajah, who sent them on, when recruited, to Malacca in one of his own war-prows.

The "Mysore," being laden with a cargo of soft sugar at Whampoa, set sail for India on 30th November, 1818. A week after, she was overtaken by heavy squalls, and was found to be making much water. The morning of Monday, 7th December, found them in the midst of a perfect hurricane, their sails torn into ribbons, three feet of water in the hold—for the ship had been leaky when leaving the port—the attention of both officers and men being engrossed with the pumps, in the vain endeavour to prevent the sea gaining on them. After a fearful day, during which "both quarter-boats, main and mizen topmasts, gaff and all the topsail yards were swept away, and the vessel was nearly full of water, the lower deck afloat and lying over with the starboard chains in the sea," the wind fell about 9 p.m., and the moon made her appearance. Orders were given to clear away the remaining boats, the pinnace and long-boat being alone left. In an hour the former, furnished with ten oars, three lug-sails, jib, an anchor and cable, a water-bucket, an axe and musket, was ready to be hoisted out. She was intrusted to the second and fourth officers, with directions to keep her under the ship's lee while the long-boat was got out. While the pinnace was being lowered, she was struck on the side by a belaying-pin, which unfortunately stove in two planks; she consequently made a good deal of water, on finding which the fourth officer and several of the crew scrambled on board the "Mysore" again, leaving the others to their fate. Heavy weather again set in, and those remaining in the pinnace had difficulty in keeping her so near the ship as they wished. All hands on board were meanwhile busied in endeavouring to get out the long-boat. "When they had her up as high as the gunwale, something gave way; we in (the pinnace) could not exactly see what, it being dark, but we supposed it to be one of the tackles, and the boat afterwards fell down on the deck. It was now about midnight: a heavy squall came on, which blew us to leeward of the ship. However, in about half an hour afterwards we could see the long-boat again above the gunwale and seemingly outside the ship, and heard the carpenters called for several times, I suppose for the plugs of the scuppers

in the boat's bottom." Just at this point the party in the pinnace heard the captain's voice hailing them to pull hard to the ship, which now seemed settling very fast; but in a few minutes she made two or three very heavy plunges, and then with her freight of living souls disappeared, having, it is supposed, parted in halves about the fore hatchway, with a tremendous crash. The survivors in the pinnace pulled with all their might towards the dreadful scene, but by this time the moon had gone down, and not a single soul could be seen.

"Sometimes a broken yard or mast would come across us to endanger our boat, which we avoided as much as possible; still hearing cries on all sides, and endeavouring all in our power to reach the place whence they proceeded, but in vain, the swell and wind being too powerful for our feeble efforts, having been completely worn out for the last few days."

After four hours' ineffectual attempts to pick up any of their shipmates, the party had to abandon all hope of ever again seeing any of them.

The pinnace by this time was half full of water, which they baled out, stopping the hole as best they could with one of the Lascar's blankets. Having appointed one of their number to sit by the leak, and continue the work of baling, the rest resigned themselves to sleep, of which they had had none for two nights.

At daybreak they could see no vestige of the "Mysore," and found themselves in a pitiable plight, having no food on board, no chart, no compass. The second officer, now, alas! the sole survivor of those who had had command in the ship, and whom in the remainder of our narrative we shall designate "the captain," committed himself to the care of Him who rules the winds and waves, and set himself heartily to the task of guiding his frail bark as best he could.

Having cut up one of the thwarts, and fitted a piece of it into the hole on the boat's side, they succeeded in stopping up the leak which had threatened to prove so troublesome. They then put on as much sail as she could safely carry, and at length came in sight of some islands, on which, however, they could not for some time effect a landing in consequence of the surf. When they did land on one they found nothing to eat but the heart of bamboo, and some soft roots, but they got their bucket filled with fresh water.

Five days after they had been separated from the wreck, one of the Lascars was seen sitting in the bows with his back turned, munching something. This was found, on examination, to be some biscuits and brown sugar which he had brought with him, and which, on being produced in the corner of his handkerchief, had turned to pap with the salt water. It was, however, shared among them, each getting a dessert-spoonful, their first breakfast for many a day.

For days they continued enduring dreadful hardships from hunger, thirst, and exposure to the weather, not to speak of the dangers which they ran from the violence of the squalls, which from time to time threatened to engulf their pinnace.

The writer of the journal then describes trial from another quarter. "I now thought we had gone too far to the west, and were in the Gulf of Siam. Hauled up to the eastward to make the Straits of Singapore. The crew, upon seeing this, were much dissatisfied, and insisted on my still keeping to the south-west. All my persuasion would not do: they said we could never make the land in that manner, and persisted on keeping before the wind. So we again bore up to the south-west. Having very unfavourable weather, with heavy rains and calms, my feelings were much hurt at the behaviour of the

Lascars, as I thought we had done very well, and were in a fair way to make the straits; but now to be led away by these ignorant people to a country with which none of us were acquainted completely stupefied me; in short, I let go the tiller, and told them to steer their own course, resigning myself to the will of Providence. In this way we sailed for two days."

Bodily weakness had deprived them of the services of some of the crew, and those who were still enabled to keep up were so exhausted and emaciated as to feel that a few days longer must inevitably see them too in the position of three of the Lascars, who lay prostrate in the bottom of the boat, crying out, "Ma, bap, khana ne; mwyaga!" (Mother, father, no food: we shall die!)

But, in singular illustration of the oft-repeated truth, "Man's extremity is God's opportunity," the morning of Sunday, 20th December, found them alongside of a shore, on which they descried plenty of cocoa-nut trees, some houses built in the English fashion, and every appearance of a large town. Having with difficulty effected a landing, they were welcomed by the Rajah and his attendants, who conducted them to a place of shelter, supplying them with eatables, which they felt to be the sweetest meal they had ever eaten, having been now thirteen days at sea in their open boat, not to mention the days of tempestuous weather which they encountered before their vessel was wrecked, and on which they had no cooking of provisions on board.

Tringany was the name of the place where they had thus landed. It was governed by an elder and younger Rajah, the former giving himself no trouble with public affairs, the whole management of which devolved on the latter. There were about one hundred junks belonging to the port all laid up for the winter. A considerable amount of trade was carried on with Cochinchina, Siam, Batavia, Malacca, and other parts, in gold-dust, pepper, sago, rice, coffee, and betelnut, as exports; while the imports were iron, cloth, guns, etc. In fishing the natives did not go out in boats, but used nets, walking in the surf up to their neck. The captain amused himself as best he could in fishing and hunting. One evening, being bright moonlight, he tells us he was indulged with a sight of the whole of the Rajah's seraglio, about thirty ladies, taking their customary airing on foot. They seemed much amazed at seeing "the 'ourang pooty,' as they called me, having never seen a white man before."

The captain had his patience much tried with the many vexatious delays which occurred, ere, after recovering from the sad effects of his many privations, he could get under sail again. The Rajah at one time affirmed that it would be highly dangerous to set out to sea for some weeks, on account of the stormy weather they expected at that season. When, again, his scruples were overcome, and a day fixed for embarkation, the Malay seamen who were to accompany the expedition declared that go they would not in so stormy a month. In the course of one interview which the captain had with the head Rajah, he expressed his unwillingness that he should leave the place at all, and asked him to take command of his war-prows, offering him as an inducement the hand of any of the princesses he chose in marriage.

At last a prow was got ready, manned, and provisioned, and, after the writing of as many papers and the procuring of as many signatures and seals as might have cleared out a whole fleet of Indiamen, they got under way on 19th January, 1819. In the course of their voyage they fell in with several vessels, and, on hauling up to speak to one, were saluted with round and grape shot, the captain and officers being evidently alarmed at

the appearance of a manned Malay prow, having on board an officer with a white face, and the high-crowned Portuguese black hat he had received from the Rajah. This vessel afterwards proved to belong to the King of Siam, and was commanded by a gentleman from Dorsetshire, of the name of Mitchell, with whom the captain ultimately became very intimate at Calcutta.

Towards the afternoon of the 28th January the voyagers sighted the Roads of Malacca, into which, a favourable breeze springing up, they pressed with full sail, and came safely to anchor at two o'clock. Here the captain received much attention from the agents of the owners of the "Mysore," who procured for him and the Lascars a passage to Calcutta in the "Hope," from whose officers they experienced all manner of kindness, reaching their destination after a pleasant voyage.

Our readers may easily conceive what would be the captain's feelings when Calcutta was at length entered by him, as he thought of his many messmates in the "Mysore" swallowed up by the remorseless waves, while he alone of all his own countrymen was, after so striking a preservation, brought to "the desired haven." He had experienced a deliverance which might well give a turn to all his future thoughts, and, from the reflections contained in his journal, we believe he was deeply impressed then, and continued to be so, with a sense of what he owed to the merciful providence of God.

TRADES UNIONS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE WORKING MAN'S WAY IN THE WORLD."

III.—GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS.

THE charge is often made against Unionism that it is an interference with free trade, preventing masters and men from entering into a compact which would be mutually beneficial. Doubtless there have been sufficient grounds for this charge in times past, and there may, in some places, be grounds for it even now; but then the question arises, Is there not good and sufficient reason for such interference? Experience has taught the working man that, where there are no Unions among the labourers, there is no permanent steadiness in the wages, but a constant tendency to decline. Unionism exists to prevent or to remedy this state of things, and to save the *individual* workman from becoming the mere slave of capital, by securing for *all* workmen a fixed wage. What sort of free trade is it that is interfered with by combinations for such a purpose? If free trade in labour consists only in pitting one man's necessities against another's, and so lowering the price of labour by the pressure of want and hardship, the sooner and the more effectually it is interfered with the better. The men can only protect themselves from this sort of thing by union; and in uniting for such a purpose they are to be praised, not blamed. Their union is no more than an equivalent to the combinations of masters to protect their own interests; indeed, it is not so much, since capital can always protect itself by accepting or refusing transactions at pleasure, while, to him who has no capital but his labour, the non-employment of that is ruin. It is only by union, then, that the workman can secure a fair wage for a permanency; and, this being so, the question of free trade should not be dragged in as a stalking-horse to mystify a matter with which it has no essential connection. To talk of a man's not being free to sell himself, just because the Union saves him from the frightful necessity of doing so, is mere savagery: considered from a righteous point of view, there is no stronger argument to be brought against the opposers

of Unionism than the outcries against it which are made on this interested ground.

It is sometimes advanced as one of the proofs of the non-necessity of Trades Unions, that the working man is saved from any continuous depression in wages by the competition of the masters for labour. Isolated cases there are which seem to afford ground for this assertion. We have known instances in the iron trade, in which it has happened that men of great muscular strength and power of endurance have been eagerly sought after, and bribed away from one employer to another, and have been paid wages for their work which, looking to the use they made of them, it is a pity they should ever have received. But such cases are so rare, and of such brief duration—they cover so small a spot in the vast field of labour—that, for all practical purposes, the consideration of them may be dismissed altogether. The all-but-universal fact is entirely different. The truth is, as Mr. Harrison reminds his readers, "there is an irresistible tendency in all employers, which is much more powerful and efficient in the smaller class—capitalists and sellers as against the public—not to raise wages or to lower prices. This is the 'silent combination,' which needs no formal expression, and generally becomes a point of honour." The instinct which underlies this "silent combination" is always active, and goes a long way towards neutralizing the competition for labour. On the other hand, we must bear in mind, there is the competition of labourers with each other for employment, which, in a country like ours, where there is always a vast reserve of labour-power, must far more than counterbalance any good to the labourer arising from the competition of the masters for his services.

With regard to the consideration which Mr. Harrison demands for working men on sentimental grounds, we, speaking in their interest, can hardly concur in it. A somewhat close intimacy with workmen during a period exceeding that of an average lifetime has led us to form a different idea of their general character from that entertained by the class of well-wishers who appeal to sentiment and sympathy in their behalf. We think we are right in asserting that the majority of English workers would rather not be beholden to the kindly sympathies of the classes above them for any substantial benefit of a permanent kind which they could possibly achieve for themselves without it. That the *élite* of them would prefer to do without such patronizing interference we feel sure. They ask for justice and fair play—righteous dealing "between man and man," as they sometimes phrase it—and would like to stand aloof from all "sentiment" in settling their relations with employers. They have the opinion, and they are not far wrong, that sentiment and sympathy are oftener the instigators of charity and benevolence than of fair and honest dealing; that their appropriate field of operation lies among the poverty-stricken and unfortunate, and that they need not mingle with the concerns of the independent labourer. They know well enough that the men who accept a favour can hardly vindicate their claim to a disputed right from the hands which bestow the favour; and they feel that, as the subjects of philanthropic sympathy, they are often placed in a position which is not only false and delusive, but fatal to their prospects of independence. Some of our readers may have occasionally noticed the apparent apathy with which the zealous offers of help from kind-hearted persons are received by workmen at certain crises: perhaps what we have just said may in part account for the phenomenon.

Nor can we accept Mr. Harrison's doctrine that the workman has not a commodity to sell. On the contrary,

it seems to us that his chief value to the community resides in the fact that he has a thing to sell. For all the purposes of exchange—giving value for value—it must assuredly be true that the labour of a workman is as much a commodity as the produce of his labour is a commodity, and is just as marketable. We can recognise no force in the distinctions sometimes attempted to be drawn between the capacity to work and the work done, so far as their money value is concerned. If we furnish materials, and commission a carpenter to make a box, the box when made represents the labour we pay for. The principle is the same when the labour of many men is combined for any purpose—whether production, or destruction, or transport, or re-arrangement: the thing paid for is in all cases the labour-power employed in effecting the desired purpose, whatever it may be, and such labour-power is emphatically the thing which the labourer has to sell. He may differ in circumstance and position very much from other salesmen; he is better off than some are as to facilities for disposing of his commodity, and worse off than others; but these circumstances cannot be said to change the nature of his merchandise. After all, however, this does not appear to be a matter of vital interest: if the labourer get fair play and an honest wage—the two things which the Union seeks to secure for him—he will not trouble himself much about those verbal distinctions, but will be well content to have a commodity or no commodity at the master's option.

Acknowledging, as we have done, the necessity of Trades Unions, and fully recognising the right of working men to combine for their mutual protection, and for co-operation in the furtherance of their independence, we yet cannot congratulate them much upon the moral aspect of Unionism, as it is displayed in the spirit of its adherents from time to time. We do not want to thrust the "spectre rouge"—the raw head and bloody bones—into the discussion of this question, but we cannot, for the life of us, see with Mr. Harrison that this grim goblin is to be relegated back to the last generation, and regarded as an adjunct only of the antiquarianism of the subject. It is not so long ago that he was diabolically rampant in Sheffield, doing his best to blow men and women out of their beds with gunpowder, and bring their roofs about their ears; and every now and then cases are reported in the newspapers of brutal attacks arising out of hostility to "knobsticks," and intimidation scarcely less brutal exercised towards workmen who, in the assertion of their undoubted right, think proper to dispose of their labour-power independent of the Union's sanction. Even while we write there are Unionist bullies in prison undergoing punishment most richly merited for offences of this kind. If Unionists knew where their real strength lay, they would make every possible exertion to quench and abolish this spirit for ever. What power and influence they have, and they have a great deal, they owe entirely, every particle of it, to the right-reasoning and moderate class among them, who do not sympathize with this outrageous spirit, but do all they can to repress its hateful outburst. To be as effective as it might be, the Union should forswear all interference with the actions of non-Unionists, leaving others to pursue their own course with the same perfect freedom which they claim for themselves. In proportion to their tolerance of the outsiders would be the spread of their own influence. Thousands of workers are at present deterred from joining Unions by their dislike of the combative, aggressive, and conspirator-like conduct of the more violent class of members; and parents and guardians, ignorant of every-

thing concerning Unionism but its demonstrative antagonism to capital and to "knobsticks," are heard to warn young lads on their outset in life to have nothing to do with it. For this prejudice, in justification of which little or nothing can now be said, but which is very widely spread, the members of Trades Unions have only to thank themselves; and there is no risk in asserting that years will have to elapse before it will be effaced entirely from the public mind. As that gradually takes place the numbers of enrolled Unionists will increase; but there will always be a rival body of workmen, morally and numerically strong, standing aloof from the Union, however friendly to it, and that for reasons which we have already given and need not repeat. Hostility on the part of Unionists to this rival body, should it ever assume a practical form, may have the result of compelling them in their turn to unite in a new combination, the rules and regulations of which should be an embodiment of their own views in regard to the labour question; and we very much fear that such a combination could but operate disastrously to the interests of the mass of ordinary labourers.

From what has been said it may be gathered that as yet Unionism is in a crude and partially-developed stage, so much so that its actual tendencies can scarcely be grasped either by its adherents or its opponents. It is seen at times to damage its reputation and obstruct its legitimate action by the assumption of authority to which it has no claim; and again, at others, to waste its force and energies in the clamorous conflict for a worse than doubtful advantage. It engenders and fosters a miserable conceit in the minds of its shallower members, and thus lays the foundation for disagreement, which is sure to ripen into hostility when occasions for it arise; and it has the undesirable effect of fascinating the minds and engrossing the faculties of its enthusiasts to such an extent as to throw all considerations of social and intellectual improvement far into the background. For these grand defects—sorely to be lamented—it is doubtless indebted to its humble origin; creeping into existence in a rather surreptitious manner, and that in the presence of enemies but too eager to "stamp it out." Its constitution and regulating laws were not the production of an assembly of statesmen, or a coterie of philosophers learned in political and social science, but of a group of unlettered workmen smarting under the lash of oppression, and determined, at all risks, to withstand the oppressor. Here are ample grounds of apology for the defects, and shortcomings, and past wrong-doings of Unionism; while one thing has to be said in its praise in face of all detractors: it has stood between the working man and the crushing effects of capital in tyrannical hands, and opened up the way to his ultimate prosperity. What is principally needed to make Trades Unions what they should be is—greater liberality on the part of Unionists themselves, and a practical recognition of other people's rights and deservings as well as their own; and, above all, that they should fully understand and appreciate the fact that their good reputation and the spread of their principles and system depend greatly more upon their educational progress and moral elevation than upon any material triumphs they may obtain over their opponents. When Unionists have eliminated from their system the elements of social disturbance, it is pretty certain they will obtain—what they will then have a just claim to—the same legal sanction which is enjoyed by other associations, and thus have the countenance, and, if need be, the protection, of the law. We are afraid that the time for this is scarcely yet approaching,

though we heartily desire to see it, fully expecting that, whenever that consummation takes place, we shall see the beginning of the end of that bitter antagonism between masters and men which results in strikes, and the inauguration of peaceable methods for the settlement of all industrial differences. Then, we prophesy, the Trades Unions will take the form, into which indeed some of them seem already to have resolved themselves, of mutual assurance institutions for times of want of employment and sickness and death.

THE POETRY OF THE BIBLE.

V.

FIGURATIVE STYLE OF THE BIBLICAL POETRY—SONGS OF WAR AND TRIUMPH—SACRED LYRICS—CULTIVATION OF POETRY AND MUSIC UNDER DAVID—VARIETY IN THE PSALMS.

We have seen, in some of the quotations we have made from the poetical parts of the Old Testament, with what exquisite taste and judgment (which necessarily include appropriateness and effect) the inspired poets employed those figures of speech which are common to all poets, and, in fact, to all language which is prompted by the imagination or the passions. When we want to adapt our language to the tone of an elevated subject, as Blair observes, we should be greatly at a loss if we could not borrow assistance from figures, which, when properly employed, have a similar effect on language to what is produced by the rich and splendid dress of a person of rank, in creating respect, and giving an air of magnificence to him who wears it. Assistance of this kind is often needed in prose compositions; but poetry could not subsist without it. To render an object beautiful or magnificent, grand or sublime, figurative language must necessarily be employed. Without it the imagination cannot be awakened or excited. But by its aid the duller things are animated with life and beauty, while objects of a worthy description are rendered grand or sublime as the occasion requires. Dr. Aken-side happily describes its effect when he says—

"Then the inexpressive strain
Diffuses its enchantments. Fancy dreams
Of sacred fountains and Elysian groves,
And vales of bliss. The intellectual power
Bends from his awful throne a wondering ear,
And smiles."

As already suggested, the Hebrew poets excel in the use of this language, in all its varieties. It is, with them, always felicitously and appropriately introduced. Homer sometimes nods, and Shakespeare is occasionally incongruous in the use of figures; the Hebrew poets never. They are always expressive and natural. Their imagery is often thrown in suddenly, like a flash of light, and illuminates the whole subject in hand. Blair gives them a preference over the Greek and Roman authors, on this account. The comparisons of the latter, he observes, by the length to which they are extended, sometimes interrupt the narration too much, and carry too visibly marks of study and labour. The Hebrew poets, on the other hand, so employ their comparisons that they appear more like the glowings of a lively fancy, just glancing aside to some resembling object, and then returning to its track. As an example, turn to the first Psalm. The righteous man is said to be—

"Like a tree planted near streams of water,
Which yieldeth its fruit in due season;
The leaf whereof fadeth not,
And all which it beareth flourisheth."

The wicked are said to be unlike this—

"But like the chaff which the wind scattereth."

Or, to take a more regular and formal comparison. In 2 Sam. xxiii. 4, the just ruler—that is, he who rules in the fear of God—is said to be—

“As the light of the morning, when the sun riseth,
Even a morning without clouds;
As the tender grass springing out of the earth,
By clear shining after rain.”

In like manner we might notice and compare every description of imagery used by the Hebrew and other poets, always to the advantage of the former. They abound with strong expressions, bold metaphors, flowing sentiments, and animated descriptions, portrayed in the most lively colours. Theirs is the burst of inspiration, the spirit of the poet being often raised beyond himself, and labouring to find vent for ideas too mighty for his utterance.

Let us now glance at some of the varied gems of the Bible poetry.

First, there are the songs of war and triumph; as the song of Moses, after the passage of the Red Sea and the destruction of Pharaoh and his warrior hosts (Ex. xv.); and that of Deborah and Barak, after the victory over the Canaanites (Judg. v.).

The latter of these compositions abounds with tropes and figures most appropriate to the occasion. Where, indeed, can anything be found that excels it in bold sublimity or in vivid painting? Look, first, at the manner in which the Divine interposition is described:—

“O Lord, when thou camest from Seir,
When thou didst march from the fields of Edom,
The earth trembled—the heavens were dissolved—
Yea, the clouds were dissolved into waters!
The mountains melted at the presence of the Lord—
Sinai itself before the Lord God of Israel!”

Now take note of the transition to lesser objects:—

“In the days of Shamgar Ben-Anath
The highways were unfrequented,
And in by-paths wayfarers travelled;
Deserted were the villages of Israel.”

Then, when the mighty battle is described—

“From the heavens the stars fought—
In their courses they fought against Sisera.
The torrent Kishon swept them away,
That ancient torrent—the torrent Kishon.”

But the earliest, if not the finest, specimen of the heroic ode is that found in Exodus xv., “The Song of Moses.” It furnishes also a specimen of that part-singing, or choral response, which gives form to many of the lyrical compositions in the Old Testament.

Dr. Kalisch, a Jewish translator and commentator of a high character, very justly pronounces this hymn to be as sublime and vigorous in its contents as it is masterly and perfect in its form. It has not only served, he observes, as a model for all later hymns of victory in sacred lore, but it has scarcely been equalled by any production of a similar class in any other literature. Now it is this very richness, both in substance and form, that has tempted critics to indulge so largely not only in linguistic subtleties and logical niceties, but in artistic speculations as to the distribution of its several parts. There is some danger here of accepting as more than conjectures what is attempted towards dividing and distributing the several parts of the composition for singing. Regarded as conjectures, they help us to see further into the beauties of the song, as a masterpiece of its kind, than our translation of it can do. That there was a chorus there can be little doubt: “Then sang Moses and the children of Israel this song.” And, again, ver. 20 and 21: “And Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a timbrel in her hand; and all the

women went out after her with timbrels and with dances. And Miriam answered them, Sing ye to the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea.”

But how the song was executed, or how its parts were distributed, is a question upon which there is necessarily a wide difference of opinion. Some say that the Israelites responded to Moses after every verse, with the words “I will sing to the Lord,” &c.; others, that the Hebrews repeated every sentence as Moses sang it before them. Rabbi Nehemiah is of opinion that Moses began with the words “Then shall Israel sing,” and that then the Israelites fell in with “I will sing to the Lord,” &c. Moses then continued, “The Lord is my strength and song,” &c.; and the Israelites resumed, “He is my God, and I will glorify him,” &c.; and so on through the whole song. Geddes was of opinion that the men repeated every single stanza after Moses, and that the women did the like after Miriam. We are much disposed to adhere to an arrangement we offered some years since, making Miriam answer the general chorus in the words of verses 1 and 21, after verses 3, 8, and 13, making a slight transposition of verse 12—which has the sanction of Geddes, Green, and Boothroyd, who follow Kennicott—and making the words of the last verse, 18th, the universal chorus of all the Israelites.

Thus arranged, the song will be—

“1 I will sing unto Jehovah, for he hath triumphed gloriously!
The horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea!

2 Jehovah is my strength and my song;
For he has been to me a Saviour.

He is my God, therefore will I make him a habitation;
The God of my father, therefore I will extol him.

3 Mighty in battle is Jehovah. His name is Jehovah.

Miriam } Oh, sing ye to Jehovah, for he hath triumphed gloriously!
answering. } The horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea!

4 The chariots of Pharaoh and his host he led into the sea:
Even the chosen of his captains have sunk in the Red Sea.

5 The depths have covered them!
They went down to the bottom, even like a stone!

6 Thy right hand, O Jehovah, is become glorious in power!
Thy right hand, O Jehovah, hath crushed the enemy!

7 Yea, by the greatness of thine excellency thou hast overthrown thine
opposers:
Thou sentest forth thine indignation; it devoured them like stubble!

8 And by the breath of thy nostrils inflamed were the waters:
Upright stood the surges even as a heap;
And the depths congealed in the heart of the sea!

Miriam } Oh, sing ye to Jehovah, for he hath triumphed gloriously!
answers. } The horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea!

9 The enemy said, I will pursue, overtake, divide the spoil;
My lust shall be satisfied upon them;
I will draw my sword, my hand shall destroy them!

10 Thou didst blow with thy wind, the sea covered them;
They sank like lead in the mighty waters!

12 Thou stretchedst out thy right hand; the earth swallowed them up!

11 Who is like unto thee, O Jehovah, among the mighty?
Who is like unto thee?
Glorious in holiness; fearful in praises; working wonderfully!

13 Thou conductest, in thy kindness, this people thou hast redeemed;
Thou guidest them in thy strength to thy holy habitation.

Miriam } Oh, sing ye to Jehovah, for he hath triumphed gloriously!
answers. } The horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea!

14 The nations will hear it and tremble;
Terror will seize the inhabitants of Philistia.

15 Then the chiefs of Edom will be amazed;
Trembling will seize the mighty men of Moab:
All the inhabitants of Canaan will melt away with fear!

- 10 Fear and dread will fall upon them :
By the greatness of thine arm they will be dumb as stone !
Until thy people pass over, O Jehovah !
Until this people, thou hast purchased, shall pass over !
- 17 Thou wilt bring them in, and plant them in the mountain of thine inheritance ;
In the place which thou, O Jehovah, hast made for thy abode ;
In the sanctuary, O Jehovah, which thy hands have established !
- 19 *Universal chorus.* } Let Jehovah reign for ever and ever !"

And then how much will the magnificence of the composition be heightened, when we throw our minds back into the circumstances under which it was sung ! The inspired poet, as Kalisch remarks, powerfully moved by the mighty impulse of extraordinary events, surrounded by a people miraculously delivered from an all but certain ruin, and beholding the corpses of the revengeful foes heaped upon the opposite coast, is carried away to a glowing effusion of gratitude, of rapture, and of hope ; an effusion in which neither his mind heeds the fetters of pedantic logical connection, nor his imagination the restraints of prosodical rules : it is an ode of the highest lyric flight, the result of the enthusiasm of the moment, the production of a lofty genius and an overflowing heart.

By-and-by the chords of the poet's harp were swept by the hand of the poet-king, in honour of his mighty Deliverer. David is equally happy in triumphant odes, in songs of prayer or praise, and in plaintive elegy ; and all his compositions are characterized by sweetness and beauty. It was during his reign that the musical taste of the Hebrews reached its height. His piety and munificence made ample provision for the introduction and support of vocal and instrumental music into the religious services of the kingdom. For the service of the tabernacle he appointed no fewer than four thousand Levites, divided into courses, and marshalled under leaders, whose sole business it was to perform the vocal and instrumental music in the public worship. Asaph, Heman, and Jeduthun were separated to the office of prophesying or singing, with harps, with psalteries, and with cymbals ; and it would appear from the titles of some of the Psalms that they were also eminent composers. The number of those who were cunning or skilful in song was two hundred fourscore and eight ; while the number of those who played upon instruments was, as we have said, no less than four thousand. In fact, the description which is given in the book of Chronicles (b. 1, ch. xxv.) of this pious and magnificent prince's institutions for the cultivation of music and poetry show that they were more costly, more splendid and magnificent, than ever obtained in the public service of any other nation.

There can be no doubt that the effect produced by the choral appointments of the Temple upon the minds of those who had the privilege of worshipping there was very great ; and, although we must attribute to the piety which characterized the Hebrew monarch, through the greater period of his life, the intense desire he so often expresses to be present in the house of the Lord, it is not at all inconsistent with that to suppose that there was much in the services that tended, if not to create, to give intensity to that desire.

But there are other compositions than those of David, comprised in the book of Psalms, that should not be passed by unnoticed. The spirit that breathes in the lyrics of Asaph is suggestive and instructive, the historical records of the nation being felicitously employed for the purposes of reproof and example, and to furnish motives of action withal. The contributions of the sons of Korah have great force, are rich in sentiment, and sometimes really overpowering.

The book of Psalms may, in truth, and with propriety, be denominated "the Hebrew Anthology"—

"A mine where many a living gem lies casketed."

It presents us with every variety of composition—song, idyl, elegy, ode, pastoral ; some of them exultative, others mournful ; some didactic, others reflective ; some historical, others prophetic ; and many of them exhibiting, in a striking way and with great elaboration, that peculiarity of Hebrew literature of which we have already spoken—the parallelism in all its varieties. This can scarcely fail to be detected by a reader of our English version, which preserves, in a remarkable degree, the form and order of the original words and sentences. Thus we perceive, very clearly, the form of composition in Psalms xxiv. xvi. cxlviii. and in many others, which were undoubtedly adapted for that alternate or responsive and choral style which such oratorical compositions as Handel's "Messiah" and "Judas Maccabeus," and Mendelssohn's "Elijah," have familiarized us with.

Bishop Lowth has very beautifully illustrated the twenty-fourth Psalm, which is one of these choral odes, composed, as is believed, on the great and glorious occasion of the Ark of the Covenant being brought back to Mount Zion. The whole people are supposed to be attending the procession, which is led by the Levites and singers, and which, as it ascends the sacred mount, and then approaches, and then enters the doors of the tabernacle, divides itself into chorus and semi-chorus, which respond to each other ; and then the full chorus of voices and instruments swell out, in all conceivable grandeur, the assuring and glorious response—

"Jehovah, God of hosts—
He is the king of glory !"

Bishop Horsley is of opinion that the greater part of the Psalms are dramatic in their form, and consist of dialogues between persons sustaining certain characters. Sometimes the Psalmist himself, sometimes the leader of the Levitical band, and sometimes the chorus of priests and Levites, opens the ode in a poem declarative of the subject, and often closes the whole with a solemn admonition deduced from what other persons say. These other speakers are, Jehovah, sometimes as one, sometimes as another of the three Persons ; Christ in his incarnate state, sometimes before, sometimes after his resurrection ; the human soul of Christ, as distinguished from the Divine essence ; Christ in his incarnate state, being sometimes personated as a priest, sometimes as a king, sometimes as a conqueror, a figure repeated in the book of Revelation, where he goes forth with a crown on his head and a bow in his hand, conquering and to conquer.

But, whatever the form of the composition, the matter is always of a high character ; in many cases truly incomparable. They treat of nearly every subject, from the creation of all things, visible and invisible—the Messiah's kingdom "ruling over all"—to the ascension of the triumphant Redeemer into heaven, where all the angels of God worship him. Here we have history, prophecy, and instruction ; prayer, adoration, and thanksgiving. And, as the learned and pious Bishop Horne observes, "We are here instructed how to conceive of them aright, and to express the different affections which, when so conceived of, they must excite in our minds. They are, for this purpose, adorned with the figures, and set off with all the graces of poetry ; and poetry itself is designed yet further to be recommended by the charms of music, thus consecrated to the service of God : that so Delight may prepare the way for Improvement, and

Pleasure become the handmaid of Wisdom; while every turbulent passion is calmed by sacred melody, and the evil spirit is still dispossessed by the harp of the son of Jesse."

"Sing aloud of the Lord, ye righteous:
Praise is becoming for the upright.
Praise the Lord with the harp.
With ten-stringed lute hymn ye unto him.
Sing unto him a new song;
Strike the harp sweetly, with shouts of triumph!"
(Ps. xxxiii, 1-3.)

WELLINGTONIANA.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "MEN I HAVE KNOWN."

THERE was much worldly wisdom and a large share of common sense in the Duke. What was developed in stratagem and tactics in war was frequently visible in minor concerns of life. I remember an after-dinner conversation, which related to a speech and vote on the previous night in the House of Peers, and seemed to be in direct opposition to what was anticipated from him. No one in the company could account for it, when the Marquis Wellesley observed, "Ah, let him alone for a reason! You do not know my brother. He is the cunningest dog that ever existed!"

Count D'Orsay modelled both brothers, and, when I said something of their different characters as exemplified in the statuettes, answered, with his inimitable lisp, "Yes; the one is the cock pheasant, the other the hen." And, *à propos* of sculpture, I was once seated at table next to Chantrey, and the Duke might be five or six seats off, when the artist bid me observe the formation of his ear, which, in fact, lay very flat and small upon his head or neck, and did not appear to have the convolutions in shape which are usually seen in that least-noticed of human features. The Duke, you know, was a little deaf. This occurred in a small party at the Mansion House, given by the Lord Mayor to celebrate the choice of the equestrian statue of his grace now in front of the Royal Exchange, and which the Lord Mayor had decided by his second (casting) vote, on the committee being equally divided.

Two or three times it occurred to me to have slight personal intercourse with his grace, yet even in these trivial things there were some particular characteristics to be noticed. I happened to have some early intelligence of an arctic expedition which the Duke heard of, and wished to see. My friend, Mr. G. P. R. James, resided near him at Walmer, to whom he paid courteous attention as a neighbour, and who was, perhaps, the only literary man he ever condescended to notice. The Duke addressed him on the subject with "Oh, I know Mr. — very well: he will be happy to oblige me." And so I was, though it reminded me of the story of Delpini, the opera clown, who, on being told that the Prince Regent said he knew him, exclaimed, "Oh, he brags, he brags." My name may have been familiar to the Duke as that of the editor of the "Literary Gazette," in those days the only journal of its class, but any more personal knowledge might amount to this:—I was the medium to convey a packet of an acceptable kind to his grace, and sent it to Apsley House accordingly. It was refused to be taken in, and I had no alternative but to write to the Duke explaining what it was, and my difficulty in procuring its reception. In immediate answer I got from him a note, thanking me for my politeness, and excusing the porter; for, it was stated, if he took in all the parcels and packets sent, it would soon turn the dwelling (roomy as it was) into an old lumber-store, or a museum of every sort of curiosity, amid

which nobody could live in any degree of comfort. To ensure the free passage of my small packet, however, the Duke had written on the bottom of the note-paper his own address, with directions for me to tear it off and paste it upon my cover. And so it found entrance into Apsley House. To my great regret in later days, when Wellington autographs became so valuable, I did not preserve so curious a specimen of his grace's manuscript. Many of the notes in the hands of collectors, professing to be autographs, were not written by the Duke, but by his secretary, whose handwriting greatly resembled that of the Duke.

I may observe, as proof of a remarkable caution, that the Duke almost invariably signed his name on a part of the paper where nothing could be written above or below the signature. Connected with this I may mention that, after having been, with the present Duchess and others of his family, to look at Mr. Wyatt's grand cast of the horse now on the gateway at Hyde Park Corner, he called early on the next morning in a hired cab. The workman at the door recognised him, but respectfully presented the book in which visitors were requested to insert their names. "Oh ay," said his grace; and, taking the pen in hand, deliberately inscribed "Dr. Wellesley." It was certainly a university honour used in a strange manner, in a strange place.

In despite of all the censure of the group on the arch at Hyde Park Corner, the Duke was very much gratified with it, and approved of the design. The artist, Mr. Wyatt, belonged, indeed, rather to the Amateur than the Academy class, and hence, perhaps, something of the amount of obloquy poured out upon him and his works. But he possessed fine conceptions and a cultivated taste; so much so as to approach nearly to genius. The tomb of the Princess Charlotte challenges the admiration of intelligent foreign travellers who have published their opinions; the statue of George III, in Cockspur Street, bestrides the best modelled horse in the kingdom, in spite of James Smith's jest on—

"The pig-tail of copper,
Which is not proper,"

though it was (as the whole is) the King in his habit as he lived; and even Lord Dudley's five thousand guinea dog (for which the sculptor—in his pride of art!—refused to accept five thousand pounds), with its beryl eyes, was, to say the least, a perfect fac-simile portrait, requiring great skill and ingenuity to execute. With all the artistic shortcomings alleged against him, Wyatt was unquestionably "master of the horse."

Some folks asserted, and assert, that the Duke was surprised at Brussels; for he was at the Duchess of Richmond's ball when the news came of Napoleon's movements. True, but every arrangement had been quietly made beforehand by the Duke. It was not easy to penetrate his private deliberations. In Spain, upon one occasion—the morning of a famous battle—the aides-de-camp, scouts, and spies arrived successively in hot haste, describing the force and approach of the enemy, while the Commander-in-Chief sat ruminating at his breakfast-table, and "made no sign." At length he roused up sufficiently to bid them let him know when the French had crossed a certain small stream. Well matured, and perfect had been his dispositions of his army before retiring to sleep. Still he might wish to ascertain the nature of the advance, and was supposed to be deep revolving his plans in anxious thought as he ate his egg with odd, wry-face making; but, at the end, turning to his staff-chief, the late Lord Raglan, asked, "Fitzroy, was your egg a good one? for mine was altogether abominable!"

The Duke's repudiation of the idle invention of his call, "Up, guards, and at 'em!" is well known. He declared it was impossible to be, and was only a story "fit for poets, novelists, or historians." He ranked them all together. He also repudiated the story of the meeting at that place with Blücher, and thence the title of "*La Belle Alliance*,"* which, he said, was an embellishment to get a pretty name for the battle. Upon all such subjects, from the loosest rumours which got afloat to statements of the gravest importance, he was ever open and frank in his social intercourse, often discussing topics pre-eminently concerning himself as if they were quite indifferent and he a mere looker-on.

Upon questions of a public, and especially of a military nature, he was absolutely obstinate. I had some ado in endeavouring to get brevet rank for a friend of mine, an officer in the Royal Marines, who had performed a service to Russian royalty which it was usual to recognise by that step in promotion. The Duke set his face against the claimant because he did not belong to the regular army, and there was no precedent in the marines. It involved, however, a customary compliment, to which the Emperor of Russia was entitled, and Prince Lieven backed the application through several "protocols;" but all in vain, and the last I heard of it was from the Prince, through Dr. Smirnov, that he could do no more, having got "an F.M." from his grace, whom he would not like to provoke any further. My friend, Captain Johns, was consequently disappointed, and felt desirous to learn why an F.M. was the first distinct indication that the Commander-in-Chief was getting angry. All the preceding correspondence might be in passionless diplomatic phraseology; but it appeared that, when the Duke's notes commenced "F.M. [Field-Marshal] the Duke of Wellington," foreign ambassadors thought it high time to urge their matters no more.

One day Mr. Wilson Croker was boasting of the powers of his phrenological organ of Locality, and affirmed that, by carefully observing any hill or rising ground which he happened to be ascending, he could predict the character and formation of the ground on the other side. "Ah!" said the Duke, "what an invaluable aide-de-camp you would have been to me! It would have spared many a perilous enterprise, and saved many a precious life." Mr. Croker sat, looking uneasy, under this play upon his organ.

I have heard a good story of the Peninsula, which may be known to some readers, but which I venture to repeat. One of the principal commissaries for the army came to the Duke in a grievous condition, with a complaint that General Picton had commanded him to have a certain quantity of stores and provisions at a certain place on the morrow, and threatening that, if he did not find them there, he would hang him. He represented to the Duke that it was impossible to fulfil the order! "And Picton threatened to hang you if you did not?" said the Duke. "Yes, your grace; and what is to be done?" replied the commissary. "Well," returned the Duke, "I would advise you to have the provisions at the appointed spot; for if not, and Picton said he would hang you, you may depend upon't he'll do it!" It was added that Picton had no need to keep his word, and the lesson was not lost on the commissariat.

I witnessed his entry into Paris after the battle of Bayonne, 1814. There was a grand review of the allied troops, and he rode up in plain undress along with the

English ambassador, Lord Castlereagh. But no sooner was he recognised than the enthusiasm of his reception exceeded all description. Emperors, and kings, and other great generals were deserted, and shouts of "Vive le brave Vellinton!" shook the Tuileries.

Next year Waterloo and its consequences superseded this gratifying state of affairs; but the Duke maintained a very cordial intercourse with his old enemy, Marshal Soult, whilst he was French Minister in London. Time wears out prejudices; and it is pleasing to believe that wiser and better national feelings have grown up and are cherished for the welfare of both countries and the world.

The usual term of "the iron Duke" was not inapplicable to his physical constitution as well as his firm mind. He seemed to possess exemption from most of the ordinary physical infirmities of human nature. Sickness, for example, no matter in what cause originating, though perforce to be submitted to, he, at any rate, regarded as something to be concealed: it was a sign of weakness of which he felt ashamed, and which he would scarcely acknowledge even to the physician who attended him. In 1823, when on a visit to the Marquis of Hertford, he was attacked with inflammation, which only yielded to profuse bleeding, and left much weakness behind. He could not, therefore, deny the fact that he had been ill, but he scorned the idea that there was the slightest danger, or that any serious inconvenience had occurred to himself or others throughout his illness. Not long after, cholera, not in a very mild form, attacked him, and its effects were long perceptible in his wasted frame and emaciated countenance; but he would not allow that he had suffered more than a slight derangement of the stomach. I have an amusing anecdote bearing on this peculiar disposition. On a casual severe but temporary cold, he was nursing himself in Apsley House, in a warm apartment, muffled up about the head and face, with a screen drawn round the fireplace, and ordered to be denied to everybody. In this invisible condition, it so happened that Marshal Lord Beresford called, and, presuming on ancient fellowship, would take no denial—was sure the Duke would be glad to see him—and followed the valet so closely up the stairs that he could only open the door with the Marshal at his elbow, near enough to hear the peevish exclamation of the invalid—

"Who is it?"

"Lord Beresford, your grace," answered the attendant.

"What does the old fool want?" exclaimed the sufferer; and the Marshal hurried down-stairs without peeping or paying a compliment behind the screen.

He took intense interest in the family strifes of his nephew, "Long Wellesley," Lord Mornington. I have read letters from him to the lady, full of excellent advice, and extending over several sheets of note-paper; indeed, to all concerned in these miserable exposures he acted with so much good sense, wisdom, and consideration, that it appeared wonderful his interference could have been ineffectual.

In domestic matters he was very natural and simple. He transacted a world of business, and every day of his life was actively employed. He was an early riser even in winter, and Mrs. Cress, his housekeeper, and the greatest favourite of his household, was sure to have the fire so nicely "laid" in the small room below, that he could light it himself, and in three minutes have a cheerful blaze. It was upon some one speaking of turning in bed to enjoy another sleep that he said, "What! turn in bed? When a man turns in bed he ought to turn out!"

* The Supplemental Despatches of the Duke have confirmed this statement, showing that the meeting between these great commanders took place fourteen miles off, at Genappe; yet Macleise has been led to perpetuate the error in his admirable painting for the House of Lords.